Note: The Education Report can be viewed online at http://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/news/report/

Issue No. 37

In The News

Second Agreement to Improve Aboriginal Student Success

New Appeal Process Introduced for Parents and Students

New Learning Opportunities at Upgraded Mt. Boucherie

New School Serves Community as Well as Students

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Links

- Media Room
- StrongStart BC
- LearnNow BC
- School Choices
- Healthy Schools
- ReadNow BC
- School District Visits

Message from Minister Shirley Bond

Honourable Shirley Bond, Minister of Education

At this time of year, B.C. normally celebrates education week, taking time to recognize many of the excellent educators and students in the province.

As I've visited public, independent, and band schools across B.C., I've met countless teachers, parents, trustees, support staff and administrators who deserve recognition.

That's why this government has proclaimed March 2008 to be Education Month. The Ministry of Education, and its partners, have planned a series of celebrations throughout the province — all month long.

Education month will also give you an opportunity to discover education events that have been planned in your area, or to promote events in your school and community. An online calendar is available at www.bced.gov.bc.ca/edmonth/ for you to see what's happening around the province.

When viewing the calendar, browse the Student e-Gallery. These excellent artworks were submitted by B.C. students. Also, participate in the EdFacts history contest — you could win a family trip to Victoria, including travel, accommodation and tours of the B.C. Legislature and Royal BC Museum!

During my school visits, I have always seen that, by working together, we are progressing toward our shared goal of making B.C. the best educated, most literate jurisdiction in North America. As we celebrate Education Month, please accept my thanks for all you do in the service of B.C. students.

Province Recognizes Top Teachers

Premier Gordon Campbell kicked off education month by honouring 20 teachers from around the province at the first-ever Premier's Awards for Teaching Excellence. The awards recognize the efforts of outstanding teachers in key areas, including Aboriginal learning, environmental awareness, distributed learning, healthy living and literacy. Read more.

Education Minister Shirley Bond joins Premier

Gordon Campbell and Lt. Gov Steven Point in congratulating the recipients of the first annual Premier's Awards for Teaching Excellence at Government House in Victoria.

HOT TOPIC

Boards of education have a strong record of settling disputes between students or their parents and school staff, teachers or administrators. At the same time, parents who have been unhappy with a board decision have been further frustrated by its finality. Only by engaging the Ombudsman, the Human Rights Tribunal, or the courts could parents appeal the decision.

Now, however, parents and students with concerns about decisions made by board of education employees will have the opportunity to request an appeal through a Superintendent of Achievement. These education experts have the ability to recommend mediation or adjudication in order to settle disputes between parties.

The new process is reserved for the most important issues: those that significantly affect the education, health or safety of students. Examples include expulsions and suspensions, excluding students from school because of medical conditions, the creation of Individual Education Plans (IEPs) for students with special needs, bullying, harassment, violence and weapons, and the application of financial hardship policies.

For more information, or to submit an appeal, visit www.studentappeals.gov.bc.ca.

This new student appeals process will further promote quality and accountability in B.C.'s world-class education system.

Reading Corner

Clayton Mack, an Aboriginal elder, was part of the Nuxalk Nation, and one of its most famous storytellers. A renowned bear hunter and guide, Clayton was never short on stories. This book, recorded, compiled and edited by his physician during his last years at the Bella Coola hospital, reads like Mack's autobiography in the oral tradition. Both educational and entertaining, this book is suitable for readers in grades 8-10.

Bella Coola Man
Harvey Thommasen